

NEWS FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

From

Congressman Larry Combest

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COMBEST INSPECTS CRP PROPOSAL FROM USDA

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- U.S. Representative Larry Combest (R-Texas) announced he will chair a House Agriculture subcommittee hearing on February 26 to examine USDA's Wednesday announcement of rules governing the Conservation Reserve Program. The Texas Panhandle, South Plains and Permian Basin Region account for 1.5 million acres at stake for re-enrollment in CRP, which protects highly-erodible acreage through conservation contracts between landowners and USDA. In fact, Combest noted that the region holds 90 percent of all of Texas' CRP acreage.

"It is critical that USDA's new rules meet the need for keeping fragile soils protected," said Combest, chairman of the Agriculture Subcommittee on Conservation Resource. "I will hold a careful but timely examination into the effect of USDA's regulations on landowners with acres currently enrolled in CRP. A large amount of land went into 10-year contracts which expire this year, so a careful but timely review by my subcommittee is essential. This information is long overdue from USDA, with landowners now faced with uncertainty about re-bidding land or plowing the acreage for planting."

USDA will accept CRP bids from landowners from March 3 through March 28. USDA has previously indicated that CRP land will be selected in late May.

Combest's subcommittee examination of these new USDA regulations on CRP will be held in Washington, D.C. on February 26 at 10:00 a.m. in the House Agriculture Committee Room, 1300 Longworth Building.

(EDITORS NOTE: Below is a repeat of the expected average county CRP rental rates)
AVERAGE CRP ACREAGE RENTAL RATES (May be adjusted depending on soil productivity)

(Amounts per acre include the \$5 maintenance reimbursement)

Andrews	\$34	Ector	\$31	Lubbock	\$36	Parmer	\$36
Bailey	\$36	Gaines	\$34	Midland	\$33	Randall	\$29
Cochran	\$37	Hansford	\$33	Moore	\$31	Sherman	\$32
Dallam	\$30	Hartley	\$30	Ochiltree	\$33	Terry	\$35
Deaf Smith	\$31	Hockley	\$36	Oldham	\$29	Yoakum	\$35

